


I believe them incapable, for many reasons, of properly controlling public affairs, but I do believe them capable of making valuable citizens under the wiser control of the whites. My solution of the problem is simply, "Hands off." Let no man be afraid that if the Northern people cease their interference the negroes will be driven to the wall. On the contrary, it is your interference that causes or aggravates whatever of trouble is inflicted upon them.

SPEECH
OF
SENATOR Z. B. VANCE,
OF NORTH CAROLINA,
ON
THE NEGRO QUESTION,
DELIVERED IN THE
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
ON
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1890.

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S P E E C H
OF
S E N A T O R Z . B . V A N C E .

Mr. VANCE. Mr. President, in accordance with the notice which I have heretofore given, I ask leave to make a few remarks on the bill introduced by the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. BUTLER].

The VICE-PRESIDENT. If there be no further morning business that order is closed, and the Chair lays before the Senate the bill (S. 1121) to provide for the emigration of persons of color from the Southern States.

Mr. VANCE. Mr. President, one of the earliest recorded utterances of inspiration is, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. This is another way of saying that the mistakes of one generation endure to plague another.

Several hundred years ago this fair land of ours, which it would seem God had specially intended for the chosen seat of liberty and the noblest development of man, was desecrated by the introduction of human slavery. The serpent thus entered into our political Eden. The great forests which covered the face of the earth called for labor to remove them, for more labor than the slowly coming immigration of the free races afforded. The morals of the age justified the holding of barbarous races in bondage. The favorite place for obtaining bondsmen was the African coast. So desirable did the supplying of the newly discovered islands and continents of the West with cheap labor appear, that old John Hawkins was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, as much for his successful introduction of a cargo of slaves into the West Indies, as for his exploits against the Spaniards. Even so great and good a man as Las Casas, the Spanish apostle to the Indians, once advocated the introduction African slavery.

First and foremost in this calamitous and iniquitous traffic was New England. In fact, so anxious were the good people of those colonies for slaves that they reduced to bondage the native Indians whom they captured in war, and, not unfrequently, those wicked people of their own race and blood who were guilty of differing from them in religious opinions.

The tobacco-growing colonies of the South soon followed suit in the importation of African slaves, and early found how profitable this cheap and involuntary labor was in the raising of their great staple. The introduction of the cultivation and uses of cotton soon gave a further impetus to slaveholding, and made the chief prosperity of all the Southern regions to depend mainly upon this enforced labor. Whilst the want of profitable returns gradually lessened the hold of the North upon slavery, its great profits constantly increased that hold upon the South.

The stony and sterile fields of New England called for manufactures

and commerce. That commerce consisted very largely in purchasing slaves on the African coast, and selling them to Southern planters. Thus their interests constantly drifted the Northern and Southern people apart in regard to African slavery. After a time it ceased to exist altogether in the North, by reason of emancipation laws made to take effect at fixed periods, and by their sales to their Southern neighbors. By this time the wrongfulness of holding slaves fully dawned upon the conscience of the Northern people. Its prickings became so active that they not only deemed it a sin to hold a slave themselves, but to permit anybody else to hold one, even though there was no responsibility whatever upon them for the transgression.

They even went so far in obeying the dictates of conscience, that they did not hesitate to stand up boldly in the sight of God, with the purchase money in their pockets, and denounce the vengeance of heaven against their Southern neighbors for holding on to the negro which they themselves had sold them.

Every requisite to the effectual working of a good conscience was present. Slaveholding was not only unprofitable, as has been said, upon their soil and in their climate, but the lucrative trade of supplying the Southern planters was abolished by the Constitution. In addition to this their sense of rectitude was unpardonably offended by the contemplation of the well-doing of their neighbors. Of course, men who burnt witches, banished or enslaved Quakers, and had made fortunes by the horrors of "the middle passage," could not be expected to tolerate any longer the ungodly thing which brought fortunes to Virginia and Carolina planters. With ever increasing bitterness this conscientious crusade was kept up with an extravagance of language which scrupled not to denounce the Constitution itself; which respected the slaveholders' rights under State laws, as "a league with death and a covenant with hell." The inevitable result is fresh in our recollection. It ultimately led to civil war in which more than a million lives were lost and more than three billions of property destroyed, and as much of indebtedness incurred. The slaves were set free.

Those of us in the South who had deprecated the war and deplored the agitation which led to it, as we sat in the ashes of our own homes and scraped ourselves with the potsherds of desolation, yet consoled ourselves for the slaughter of our kindred and the devastation of our fields by the reflection that this, at least, was the end; that the great original wrong committed by our fathers had at last been atoned for; that the Union having been declared indissoluble, and slavery forever abolished, the one great stumbling block and stone of offense was removed, and the people of these American States, henceforth homogeneous, could pursue their great destiny harmoniously and fraternally.

How little we knew the temper of the victors in that great struggle. We made no calculation for the fact that the necessities of party supremacy would lead men as far as even the prickings of conscience for an unprofitable sin had done. No sooner had we fairly witnessed the end of hostilities before acts of Congress were passed directing the subversion of all law and civil government in the States of the South, under cover of which they were divided into military districts, over each of which was placed a general of the Army, supported by sufficient troops. To these generals and their bayonets was committed the task of forming governments for the people of these overthrown States. This they did by holding elections under military control, by suppressing the vote of every free white man in those States, who, having at any time taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, had afterwards

done any act in aid of the rebellion, and by thrusting with military force upon the ballot-box the entire mass of emancipated slaves, to whom the right to vote had been given by no law, human or divine, known to our federative system. By the constitution thus forced upon the Southern people the negroes were made voters and invested with the like privileges in all respects as the white people.

The Constitution of the United States had in like manner been so amended as to forbid the States from making any discrimination against the negro race, or in any manner impairing the rights which had thus been conferred upon them. Again, we in the South thought we had arrived at the end of our troubles connected with the negro question. Surely, we reasoned, as the colored man is now free, as he is made by law, State and Federal, equal with the white man in all respects, and has been given the ballot to protect himself in these rights, surely the matter will now be at rest. We can close the chasm which the agitation about him has created between us and our Northern neighbors. Again, were we sadly mistaken. After forty years of bitter agitation, four years of bloody war, and near a quarter of a century more of trial under the new order of things, the negro again "bobs up serenely," and for his sake we are to-day threatened not only with a political agitation sufficiently disastrous within itself, but with a servile war whose weapons shall be the midnight torch and the assassin's dagger, and whose victims shall be sleeping women and children.

This agitation and this threatened war is to arise from one of two facts: Either the friends of the negro in the North are disappointed because their well-laid schemes of reconstruction failed to secure the Republican party any aid from the Southern States, or because their reasonable expectations and hopes as to the colored man's capacity for helping himself and for governing others have been grievously wrecked.

The Senator from Kansas, in his speech a few days ago, indignantly denied the former assertion, and put the action of his friends altogether upon the high ground of benevolent patriotism. He was so candid in admitting the fault of his people for the introduction of slavery into this country, and for its retention in the North until it ceased to be profitable, that I was in hopes to hear him admit with equal candor that the whole scheme of reconstruction was intended for partisan Republican purposes. I concede this to him, however, and candidly admit that he does so believe and that, perhaps, he is the only sane man in Europe or America who is of this opinion. Taking it, then, upon his ground, is it any wonder that the truth compelled him to say:

But it can no longer be denied that suffrage and citizenship have hitherto not justified the anticipations of those by whom they were conferred. They have not been effective in the hands of the freedman, either for attack or defense.

In other words, here is a frank admission that twenty-five years of freedom and nearly as much of citizenship has proven a lamentable failure. It is true that he says the whites in the South are to blame for it; that they have employed force, violence, and fraud, of which I will say more hereafter. I will only now make this suggestion: If it be true that in States where they largely outnumber the whites they are either intimidated from voting or are defrauded in the counting of their votes, is not that a strong argument against their supposed capacity for self-government? Are a people fit to govern themselves and others who would suffer themselves thus to be treated? Is any man worthy of freedom who requires constantly to be tutored and protected in its exercise? Is a man fitted to run a race who has to be held up in order that he may walk? I have, indeed, heard of a beef which had

to be held up in order to be knocked down to fill an army contract, but I have not known men fit for freedom who would be deterred from its exercise in the face of inferior numbers. Is there anything in the sentiment of the poet who says:

Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not
Who would be free, themselves
Must strike the blow?

The Senator says—

That no other people on the face of this earth have ever submitted to the wrongs, the injustice which have been for twenty-five years heaped upon the colored men of the South, without revolution and blood.

More than once this is repeated. It constitutes the burden of his speech, around which is clustered the brightest display of rhetorical pyrotechnics ever employed to conceal a paucity of ideas by the gorgeousness of phraseology. This rhetorical display across the forensic heavens reminded me forcibly of an astronomer's description of the remarkable tenuity of the tail of a certain comet. He said that its length was a hundred million miles as it stretched athwart the skies—that its breadth was 50,000 miles—and yet the solid matter which it contained could be condensed and transported in a one-horse cart. I listened and listened with the greatest entertainment to that speech, and searched and wondered where the remedy for the evil was and when it would be announced, and when I should see the solid matter of the illumination. Suddenly, before the light expired and we were left in darkness, he announced that the solution was justice, which, however sententious it might be, was about as definite and real as the twinklings which remain under the closed eyelids after the withdrawal of a fierce light.

Justice, as he explains it, means our submission to negro rule. Having submitted to this for so long a time as he thinks would be fair, should it prove a failure he graciously promises that he will then consult with us about some other solution of the problem!

What are the facts which support this grandiose slander of an entire people? What wrongs and injustice have been done by the Southern people to these negroes that call for the "use of the torch and the dagger?" They have been given the right of suffrage, not by the free action of the Southern whites, I admit, but at least by their reluctant assent. Since their admission to citizenship they have been elected to both branches of Congress and have occupied almost every position under State authority. They have controlled entire States, counties, and municipalities, and in every instance their rule was marked by failure and ruin. It was a war against property, intelligence, and respectability. The few years of their misrule in the South will be forever remembered in our history for their corruption and retrogression, and will constitute a damnable blot on the memory of those who authorized it, and who looked on with complacency so long as the thieves were Republicans and the victims were Democrats.

Whilst ever they could hold the throttled State in the Republican ranks, and send mongrels to the Senate and House of Representatives to strengthen Republican hands against "the cowardly and degraded element in the North that sympathized with treason," not a word of protest was heard from that entire party of justice and modest righteousness. But as soon as this corrupt and incompetent rule had wrought its inevitable results and had been overthrown by the union of all the best elements in the South, aided by the superior knowledge of the

superior race, then began the complaints of Southern outrages and injustice. It is all very well to deny now that the whole object of reconstruction was partisan advantage, and to claim that the motive was patriotic. It is but the natural verification of the saying of old Samuel Johnston, that "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." All the world knows why citizenship was given to the negro and the reason of the bitter disappointment which is everywhere confessed at its results.

There is surely here no outrage against the negro that calls for revolution and blood. The wrong was against the white man, and was redressed by him without revolution. In obedience to the Constitution the Southern States admitted the colored citizens to a full participation in all the legal rights enjoyed by white citizens. They were placed in the jury-box, commissioned as magistrates, permitted to form companies in the volunteer militia, duly commissioned and armed. School-houses were built for them and normal schools established for the education of their teachers, whilst the school fund of the States was apportioned to their schools, in proportion to their numbers, with all possible fairness. Asylums were built for the care of their insane, deaf, dumb, and blind, wherein they receive the same treatment as the whites. The taxes for all this were levied by white legislators on their white constituents, who paid at least 95 per cent. of the total out of the little which the negroes and carpet-baggers had left them. If there be any wrong, injustice, in all this, it can surely be seen only by that intellectual vision which, "reaching far as angels ken," beholds no motives for the preservation of Republican supremacy in reconstruction, but only patriotic benevolence.

Since the restoration of the South to the control of its own people the progress and prosperity of the negroes have been as great as, if not greater than, in any other country where his race exists. His increase in numbers has been phenomenal, and furnishes ample proof that he is fed, clothed, and sheltered. The decrease of the death rate, of criminal convictions, and of illiteracy, taken with the gradual and unfailing increase of his wealth, which is abundantly proven by the statistics, all give the lie flatly to the oft-repeated story of oppression and wrong under which he suffered or is said to suffer. The truth is, he began to prosper when the whites took control. Progress for him would have been as impossible under his own rule as it was for the whites. Ten years more of such government as reconstruction fixed upon the South would have made that fairest portion of the American continent a howling wilderness. In short, it would have been Africanized, a fate which even the Senator from Kansas says is "not desirable;" which, taken in connection with his opening remarks on the danger of "blood-poisoning" by the adulteration of races, means much more than appears on the surface. The best thing, then, that could have been done for the negro was that which was done when the management of public affairs was taken from inexperienced and incapable hands and placed with the natural and competent rulers of the land.

Where, then, I ask again, does the outrage on the colored man come in?

The Senator makes no complaint of the causes which led to the overthrow of reconstruction. He says:

Until 1877 the unstable fabric erected by the architects of reconstruction was upheld by the military of the United States, and when this was withdrawn the incongruous edifice toppled headlong and vanished away as the baseless fabric of a vision. It disappeared in cruel and ferocious convulsions which form one of the most shameful and shocking of all the bloody tragedies of history. The attempt to reorganize society upon the basis of numbers failed.

Perhaps the Senator alludes to the stealing of the Presidency by his party, which happened in that year and which, though both shameful and shocking, and in which the attempt to reorganize society on the basis of numbers did to a certain extent fail, I did not know was properly characterized as a bloody tragedy.

It is, however, an unequivocal admission that the reconstruction edifice was unstable and incongruous—mild terms indeed for this most infernal episode in our history; that it was upheld alone by military power, and disappeared when that power was withdrawn. No wrong upon the negro appears there. It seems that these intolerable outrages, to which no other people on earth have submitted so long, are supposed somehow to exist in the fact that the overthrow of this incongruous structure—the creature of military force—has been followed by the maintaining on the part of the whites of the advantage which they gained by its downfall. “In that struggle he says that education, wealth, political experience, land-ownership in the South, all conspired against the Constitution and laws of the United States, and that they emerged from that dreadful conflict in full possession of all the powers of the States, and no serious effort has been made to deprive them of their guilty acquisition.” I beg to remind the Senator, however, that many guilty efforts have been made to deprive them of their serious acquisition.

But, inasmuch as the powers of the States are recognized by the Constitution, it is strange that the possession of them by their citizens should be held to be a violation of the Constitution.

But the taking and keeping possession of the powers of the States seems to be the wrong inflicted upon the colored man. The gravamen of that wrong is that the negro can no longer send here Republican Senators and Representatives from the South and the votes of Republican electoral colleges to aid in the manufacture of Republican Presidents. There are many errors of assumption required to make up this supposed wrong. In the first place, it is assumed that the vote is suppressed on the ground that every colored man is a Republican. Next, it is assumed that every colored Republican is necessarily incapable of being influenced or beguiled by the arts of the electioneerer, and will always cast his ballot for the Republican nominees. They who reason thus go to the census tables and ascertain the number of negro voters of qualified age, the number of white voters likewise, and then estimate what their majorities ought to be.

The discovery of a colored Democratic vote in the ballot-box is accepted as *prima facie* evidence of fraud. If those majorities are not forthcoming, they conclude that the vote of their friends has been suppressed. They forget what influences even one portion of our own people can exert over another; much less do they remember how much more easily the united, superior race, with all its intelligence, wealth, and power, can influence the action of a race so far inferior and still in the shadow of the bondage from which they have been withdrawn.

Neither has it entered into the consideration of the people of the North to place any stress upon the fact that there did exist, and still exists, between the former owner and the present freedman many of those kindly and controlling relations which existed between master and slave. It must be remembered that, in addition to his ignorance and inexperience of affairs, the colored man still leans upon and looks to his former master for direction and advice—universally so in all matters except politics; that he is almost always either the tenant or the em-

ployé of the white man, and that white man belongs to a race which the Senator from Kansas says is the—

Most arrogant and rapacious, the most exclusive and indomitable in history. It is the conquering and unconquerable race, through which alone man has taken possession of the physical and moral world. To our race humanity is indebted for religion, for literature, for civilization. It has a genius for conquest, for politics, for jurisprudence, and for administration. * * * All other races have been its enemies or its victims.

Is it possible that such a race of men as this can not without brutal violence or detestable fraud maintain its supremacy over such a race as the negro? Is it statesmanlike to assume that it can legitimately have no influence, exert no force over the weaker and more ignorant? Are there not undisputed facts sufficient to justify reasoning men everywhere in doubting the truth of these stories of outrage and wrong? For example, I am glad to say that North Carolina is one of the States in the South where there is least complaint of infringements of the colored man's rights, either at the ballot-box or in the courts of justice.

The State of Mississippi is one of the States of the South where the complaints on behalf of the colored man are loudest and most vehement; yet for six months past the negroes in eastern North Carolina have been voluntarily moving at the rate perhaps of three or four thousand per month to this very State of Mississippi. They are not going to Kansas or to any other Northern State, but to Mississippi, presumably for the purpose of having their votes suppressed and of being slaughtered—to Arkansas and to Texas. The fact is, they are influenced like other people, by the great economic law of supply and demand. For two or three years past eastern North Carolina has suffered from a failure of the crops, and the planters of Mississippi are offering the negroes better wages than the Carolina planters can afford to pay, and the chief agents employed by the Mississippians for effecting their contracts are intelligent educated negro men, many of them preachers.

Evidently they do not believe these stories that are served up for campaign, political purposes here. I do not wish to be misunderstood in this matter. That there are instances of mistreatment and occasionally of cruelty to the negroes now and then occurring in the South I candidly admit and regret. The millennium has not yet arrived in the land of reconstruction; the reign of perfect righteousness, of absolute justice, has not yet been established south of Mason and Dixon's line, though of course it is in full operation just north of that imaginary division. There there is no suppression of the popular vote by gerrymander or otherwise; there there is no purchase of the floating vote in blocks of five, no ejection of colored children from white schools or colored men from theaters and barber-chairs, and where we may hope that, in the process of time and in the spread of intelligence and increased appreciation of the virtues of the negroes, one black man may soon be sent to Congress from the North; that some railroad attorney or millionaire will make room in the Senate of the United States for the colored brother; that one colored postmaster for a white town may be appointed in the North; that in the State of Kansas, the soil so prolific in friendships for the colored man, a respectable negro, duly nominated on the Republican ticket, may receive the full vote of his party, and not be scratched almost to the point of defeat by those who love him, as he was in Topeka; that one accomplished colored man may be sent abroad to represent his country in some other land than Hayti or Liberia.

Let us hope even that the great Republican party of the North may find the colored man fit to serve his country in some other region than

the South and this great dumping-ground of political dead-beats, the District of Columbia, upon whose helpless people has heretofore been billeted, in all the offices from the judiciary down, every worn-out partisan for whom his people at home had no more use. Nay, under the appeals against the injustice of suppressing the colored vote which we daily hear, it would be a rapture of hope to express the belief that these great apostates of justice would re-tore the right of suffrage to the 225,000 people of this District, from whom it was taken on the well known ground that the negro vote was about to prove here an inconvenience. It might be replied, technically, that the injustice of suppressing votes depended upon the color of the voter, and that it was not an outrage to suppress white votes; or, again, that it was no injustice to the franchise to suppress the vote by law on account of ignorance, nativity, or poverty, as so long prevailed in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. But I positively deny that there is any systematic, authorized, or official interference with the guarantied rights of the colored man in the South!

I positively aver that these constitutional obligations concerning the colored people are observed in good faith and that all individual infringements upon them are as much deprecated by the majority of our people as similar violations of law are deprecated in the North, and their perpetrators are punished by our courts with much more good faith and promptitude than the violators of the fugitive-slave laws were punished in the North, or than election bribery is punished to-day. It was but yesterday that we were told in this Senate Chamber the story of how a great criminal in behalf of the Republican party had been shielded from justice by the connivance of his party friends, for the offense of debauching and attempting to debauch the purity of the ballot-box. He is yet at large and defiant. The condition of the Southern people with regard to crime is ample proof of this. In criminal statistics we do not fear to compare records with any people. In the category of personal violence I admit that some of our communities are open to severe criticism; but I contend that the records will show that in the more odious, baser, and less manly crimes many of the Northern States are far ahead of anything known in the South.

Be that as it may, however, the negro question has again come forward to vex the people of the South, and has to be met. Whether or not they are treated with injustice and oppression, it does not matter to those men or that party who expect to profit by the agitation; nor does it matter whether the weal of the negro or the public generally is to be advanced thereby; that is not their object.

The real motive is that some men may have a horse to ride who would otherwise perhaps have to walk. The negro and his wrongs or rights will never be quiet so long as there is a white man to ride him. It has often been asserted that a superior and an inferior race which will not amalgamate can not live together under the same government with equal rights and laws. This may or may not be true.

It is natural to suppose, if they can not agree, that the stronger will have its way and dominate the weaker; but there is one proposition, Mr. President, of which you may rest assured, there is no kind of doubt: the stronger will never submit to the domination of the weaker. This might as well be set down as *res adjudicata*.

There is another fact that may be noted now in connection with it. The Senator from Kansas let fall an expression which I regretted exceedingly to hear. Prefacing his utterance that he had never known

a people to endure such wrongs without revolution and blood, he said:

The South, Mr. President, is standing upon a volcano, the South is sitting upon a safety-valve. They are breeding innumerable John Browns and Nat Turners. Already mutterings of discontent by hostile organizations are heard. The use of the torch and the dagger is advised.

This is reasonably construed as an incitation to the work of murder and arson, and although he says that he "deplores it," yet, as the excuse and justification for such a course immediately follows, it is open to the construction that it is an indirect invitation to these people to lay our homes in ashes while we sleep, and murder unsuspecting people.

The supposition that they are capable of such atrocities, it seems to me, is proof positive of their incapacity for civilized government and the extraordinary idea of justice and humanity of him who suggests it. He surely does not know anything of the inflammable nature of the negro in the South or he would not have ventured on the expression of such a threat. He furthermore told us in this connection that in case such a calamity came upon the southern people as a servile war, attended with whatever horrors it might be waged, we need look for no help from the people of our blood in the North; that we must "tread the wine press alone."

If he speaks truly in this, he passes the blackest and vilest judgment upon his own people that ever politician dared utter.

But, Mr. President, I do not believe one word of it. As the negro race that was born and reared among us did not rise up to do us harm in the hour of our extremest adversity, even for the great boon of freedom and amidst the most tempting incitements, but continued faithful to their masters and their families even within hearing of the guns that were roaring to set them free, so I do not believe that they can be thus incited to attempt it now.

They have more of State and sectional pride and of neighborly affection for the people among whom they live than the Senator is willing to give them credit for. Nor do I believe that what he has said about the feeling of the North is true; on the contrary, I believe as firmly as I believe in the gallantry, the courage, and all of the noble qualities of the great race to which I belong, that hundreds of thousands of stout hearts would come to our assistance on the wings of steam preceded by the messenger of lightning, should we unhappily ever need such help.

It might be that they would mostly be composed of what he calls the "cowardly and degraded elements," the same elements that filled your armies for the defense of the Union and which filled the ranks of the defenders of the Constitution after the Union was saved; but, for the sake of our common kindred and common glory, I believe that there would be no such feeling and no party division in such a crisis. But, Mr. President, we shall not need to call for help; we could manage such a war without assistance. Had the Senator been a participant in or a critical observer even of the last one, he would know that the eleven Southern States, which, though much divided among themselves, unaided and alone kept the whole power of the Union, with its unlimited forces and untold treasure, at bay for four long years, could easily, with the aid of the great border States, overcome seven millions of negroes. Then there would be a solution of the negro problem that would stay solved.

But a great mistake is made by those who assume that the whites exercise no influence over the negroes except by force or fraud. The black man is attached to the South and to the great body of its people.

The behavior of the blacks since their freedom has in the main been good and gentle. All things considered, it has been wonderful. I believe I can say with truth that I have no personal knowledge of the occurrence of any riot or public disturbance anywhere in the South between the races that was not at the instigation of some white scoundrel; and in every case the blacks have got the worst of the fray, being deserted invariably by their cowardly white allies when the bullets began to fly.

The negroes know this, and are well aware that the interference of outside friends has always inured to their disadvantage. They know, too, that however arbitrary and determined to rule his own country the white man has been to them, that he has yet never deceived them by lying to them and making promises which he neither could perform nor intended to perform. whilst from the days of reconstruction they have been the victims alike of Northern scoundrels for their personal profit, and of political demagogues for their own aggrandizement; from the selling of Yankee unguents to make their hair straight, or painted pegs with which to secure land, as was said they did in our Peedee country, where some of the finest bottom lands were staked off at a dollar a peg, guaranteed by the United States Government to hold forty acres for every four pegs against any rebel in the South; to the passage of civil-rights bills for the purpose of hoisting them into positions of social equality with the whites. They know, too, that when they are in any kind of trouble they do not send North to a professional friend or philanthropist for help, but they search at once for old master and mistress, or some one of old master's children. There, I thank God, in nineteen cases out of twenty, they find the help they ask.

As among the white people there are good and bad, it is so among the colored. Naturally the proportion of bad among the latter is greater than in the former, but still there is a very large percentage indeed who would scorn to wage a barbarous warfare against their white friends, even should the white man get off the safety-valve. I venture the prophecy that should the South ever be engaged in another war her colored citizens would crowd into the ranks of her armies in numbers fully proportioned to the black population. I think our Northern friends who so glibly undertake to settle the negro question have yet to make the acquaintance of the negro himself. Their judgment of him is formed manifestly by the class that swarm around this capital city, and whose inconvenient presence caused the suppression of the suffrage of this District. You listen to the few who come here to make traffic of their wrongs, and in turn you endeavor to make profit for your party by legislation directed towards those supposed wrongs.

You acknowledge yourselves mistaken as to the results of reconstruction. Many of your people now favor the withdrawal of the representation in Congress which their numbers have given the South. Is it not possible that you are again mistaken as to the nature of the evils which affect them and what would be best for them? When you assume that because they mostly profess your politics and vote your tickets that, therefore, they are in a state of discontent that threatens at any moment to break forth in a bloody uprising, may you not be mistaken in the extent of your influence over them? Are you not aware of the difficulty, the constant tutelage, and the vast amount of money you are compelled to employ to keep them in subjection to a party whose active and respectable corporation is as far distant from them as its promises are from its performance; whilst the Democratic party,

composed of the white men of the South, are their neighbors, landlords, and employers?

Mr. President, what is the so-called negro problem? As I understand it, it is one that can not be solved by speculation or legislation; but it is a question that will be settled by nature herself, if her laws are not interfered with by the folly and passion of men. Nature will solve it as she does waste, destruction, and all incongruities. It may be thus stated: Given a high-spirited, liberty-loving, cultivated, and dominating race, occupying a free state of their own establishment, under institutions of their own creation, full of activity, energy, and progress; with them, under the same laws, possessed of absolute legal equality, dwells an inferior race, manumitted slaves of recently barbaric origin, with no race traditions, with no history of progress, but lately invested with these unaccustomed and unearned franchises—how shall the two be made to dwell together in fraternity and progress?

This is the question. It is a principle of our law, fundamental in its nature, that the majority of those to whom the franchise is committed shall rule within limits. Is it a principle of natural law, as old as man himself, that the stronger shall rule without limit. What is strength in a state? Other things being equal numbers give strength; but in the States of the South, whose conduct is complained of, other things are far from equal. The whites were not actually in superior numbers are yet possessed of far superior knowledge, courage, skill in the use of weapons and tools, race pride, traditions, experience of affairs, and self-control. Placing these two side by side, is it not as sure as certainty can be made that one will outstrip the other and control it? Nature would reverse all her own decisions if it were not so.

If the weaker be in the way of the stronger the former will be removed. If two men start on a journey, the pace is regulated by the slower, if they be compelled to keep together; and, however great the powers of the swifter, if compelled to wait for his feebler brother, his powers are of no more use than if he had them not. Naturally, he will drop his brother behind and stride forward. The attempt to restrain him by legislation is unnatural and he will resent it. To say that the superior race shall not by its superior knowledge and virtue rule the inferior, is to say that weakness shall control strength, that ignorance and vice shall control knowledge and virtue. To attempt by legislation to place ignorance and vice in control of knowledge and virtue because of the superior numbers of the ignorant, would be to enact that the civilization of great races shall not enjoy the power and influence with which God has endowed them; that three weak men, however ignorant and debased, shall forever control two white men, however wise and virtuous.

The mere statement of the proposition shows that it is hostile to the highest natural and moral laws which have been impressed upon man and constitute the basis of his civilization.

Mr. President, I know the negro well. I was born and reared among them, and have all my life lived in close association with them. I affirm to you, not that he is incapable of civilization, but that he is incapable of attaining to and keeping up with the civilization of the race to which we belong. At the very best, his refinement must be of a low order compared to ours. Any attempt, therefore, to force him into equality with us in the race of progress can result in nothing else but the retarding of the advancement of the Southern whites. Those who have determined to subject, at all hazards, to negro rule those States of the South where they are in superior numbers, have simply deter-

mined that the white man's progress shall be measured by the negro's, if, indeed, it does not result in explosion and mutual destruction. Fair-minded men everywhere may accept this as truth. The sons of Ham have had the same opportunities that the sons of Shem and Japheth have had. No where have they improved them.

I know not whether I should give credence to the oft-repeated allegation that they are forever feeling the effect of their ancestor's curse, but this I do know, that they have been in close contact with every civilization of which we have any knowledge; with the oldest Egyptian, the Assyro-Babylonian, the Grecian, the Roman, and the modern; in each of them we read of his presence and in every instance he was a slave.

He learned nothing for the benefit of his race from his civilized masters in all these ages. He has made more progress in one hundred years as a Southern slave than he made in all the five thousand years intervening from his creation until his landing on these shores.

He has no type now living on this earth equal to those of the present generation who were born and raised in the slave States of America. All of which should be considered by those who have philosophy and fairness enough to look at the matter in some other light than the necessities of the Republican party in the next campaign.

The fact dwelt upon by the Senator from Kansas concerning their behavior towards their masters during the war is fully admitted. It is a strong argument to prove either that they were unfitted for the great boon of liberty or that the horrid stories of inhuman treatment by their masters were lies. I am not only willing but anxious to have justice done them in everything, and to do all that may be required of me to aid them in the difficulties of their position; but I am not willing that they should rule me or my people. It is my pride that my State has been just to them and generous, and that in the adjusting of the new order of things after their enfranchisement I had no inconsiderable hand in providing those laws and institutions which have made them comparatively well content in North Carolina.

I believe them incapable, for many reasons, of properly controlling public affairs, but I do believe them capable of making valuable citizens under the wiser control of the whites. My solution of the problem is simply, "Hands off." Let no man be afraid that if the Northern people cease their interference the negroes will be driven to the wall. On the contrary, it is your interference that causes or aggravates whatever of trouble is inflicted upon them.

Such is the nature of man. We prefer to do things of our own volition that we would refuse to do at the dictation of those who have no right to order. Within my memory as a child there was a strong and growing anti-slavery party in North Carolina, headed by many of our greatest and most honored citizens, some of whom sat in these seats before me. Orations against slavery and its consequences were freely delivered, and with applause, before the classes of our university. This cause, under the influence of its great advocates, would soon have claimed a majority of the voters of North Carolina, but those fiery zealots of the North, who, as Carlyle says, were so anxious to serve God that they took the devil into partnership with them, began their interference. A crusade against slavery and slave-holding, in defiance of legal rights, was begun and kept up until so far was the cause of emancipation overthrown that twenty-five years after these same great and honored North Carolinians would have suffered insult and violence for repeating their orations. Men will not be bullied even into doing right. Know, there-

fore, that every speech you make, every law you enact denunciatory of or punitive against the Southern people, with a view to subject them to the rule of their emancipated slaves, defers indefinitely that state of cordial harmony between whites and blacks which is so necessary to both.

There is another way by which, in my opinion, you also do the negroes a great damage by your constant interference. You do nothing to increase the cordiality between them and their white neighbors. You know that their well-being depends upon their being on good terms with their landlords and employers more than upon anything else; yet you are constantly endeavoring to drive a wedge between them and to push them further apart. You endeavor to make them look altogether to you for help. You have coddled them so long and made them so many promises that they have ceased to rely upon their own exertions and have come to believe that it is the duty of others to provide for them. No greater injury could be done to any people.

The historian of the Spanish conquests in America, Arthur Helps, remarks that the considerate and gentle regulations provided for the Indians of the Pearl coast by the benevolent Las Casas "proved a sad restraint upon the energies of the race, as no man leans long on any person or thing without losing some of his original power and energy." You have legislated and amended constitutions for him, denounced your neighbors, and glorified the negro and officially wept over his condition until you have to a very great extent made him a "dodder," a parasitic animal without support in self-respect or self-reliance, a class of men which of all others is least desirable in a progressive community.

Any new set of conditions—

Says the philosopher, Ray Lankester—

occurring to an animal which render its food and safety very easily attained seem to lead, as a rule, to degeneration.

Applying this principle in nature to the moral world, Henry Drummond says:

Any principle which secures the safety of the individual without personal effort or the vital exercise of faculty is disastrous to moral character.

Suppose you trust the Southern people for awhile? You can not believe that any considerable number of them desire to do wrong or to treat the negroes unjustly? If you say you trust them and withhold your interference, public sentiment, with a power that can not be resisted, will soon enforce State laws and constitutional amendments in a manner that will satisfy all honest men; not perfunctorily, but with cheerful zeal.

I regret exceedingly that I can not support the bill of the Senator from South Carolina. My objection to it is on the ground of impracticability. It would result in no relief; few negroes would go from the country under its provisions and those would probably be the best. I can not say that I have any desire to attempt in any way so great and unhistorical a task as removing a whole people, amounting probably to 7,000,000. Their presence among us, of course, I regret. I should be happy to know that there was not one of them in the United States to be the unwilling cause of everlasting contention between our people. But they are here, and I for one am willing to do my best to live with them in harmony. I can well see, however, and appreciate the motive of the honorable Senator in taking this action. I know how his State has been weighed down in the past by this incubus and how dark the future of his people must appear under the ever-threatening

danger of a recurrence to the carnival of corruption and misrule of 1868-'69 and 1870.

So far as the evil may be capable of remedy by removal of any kind, I would suggest that it is perfectly practicable to induce these people to settle in the various States of this Union which now have few or no colored people. There is ample room for them throughout the Northern and Northwestern States, each one of which could receive enough to relieve the pressure entirely upon those States in the South whose progress is about to be destroyed, and yet not inconveniently interfere with the well-being of any Northern State. Besides, if the presence of negroes in superior numbers does amount to a positive evil in the South, I submit that it is the duty of the other States to assist them in removing or so distributing the evil that it shall be harmless. If the negro is a good thing we are willing to divide him up. [Laughter.] There is plenty of him to go round.

Nothing is wanting to the execution of this suggestion except the consent of these Northern States. One-half of the inducements and the solicitations which they hold out to foreigners, if extended to the negroes of the South, would within ten years draw such numbers of them as to leave all the Southern States with decided white majorities; and it is well-known that there is little or no complaint of the mistreatment of negroes where there are white majorities. This would equalize the conditions of all the States. The introduction of large numbers of the colored race into every Northern State would be equivalent to an amendment to the Constitution and would restrain you effectually from the passage of any laws or the attempting of any kind of interference that would discriminate between the States of the American Union on account of their locality or previous condition of slavery. It would familiarize the masses of your people with the negro, his capacities, his habits, and his needs, and you neither would nor could then strike any vindictive blows at the Southern people without its immediately reacting upon yourselves.

As it is impossible for us to become homogeneous by all being white, this plan would make it quite possible for us to become homogeneous by all being partly white and partly colored, retaining white majorities in each State. North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas would need not to surrender any of their colored people, and it would only require the removal of about 500,000 blacks from the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina to give every State in the Union such a decided preponderance of whites as to remove all danger of negro supremacy, and all fear of trouble from this source.

What say the Republican Senators to this? Of course you will say that your doors are open now to all who may see proper to come, but that is not sufficient to induce them to remove. Are you willing to offer them some special inducement? Are you willing to vote money out of the United States Treasury to pay their expenses and to support them for a short time until they can get a start in their new homes? Surely, you will demonstrate your sincerity in some practical, helpful way, and not confine your benevolent statesmanship to cheap words. If you will help neither black nor white, you should, in common decency, hold your peace.

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